

establish police powers for certain Inspector General agents engaged in official duties and provide an oversight mechanism for the exercise of those powers; from the Committee on Governmental Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. BREAUX:

S. 3145. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment under the tax-exempt bond rules of prepayments for certain commodities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 3146. A bill to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands and acquired lands owned by the United States, and to preserve State sovereignty and private property rights in non-Federal lands surrounding those public lands and acquired lands; read the first time.

By Mr. ROBB (for himself, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DEWINE, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 3147. A bill to authorize the establishment, on land of the Department of the Interior in the District of Columbia or its environs, of a memorial and gardens in honor and commemoration of Frederick Douglass; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 3148. A bill to provide children with better access to books and other reading materials and resources from birth to adulthood, including opportunities to own books; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 3142. A bill to expand the boundary of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL MONUMENT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today, I am introducing legislation to expand the boundary of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument in Westmoreland County, Virginia by allowing the U.S. Park Service to acquire portions of the surrounding property from willing sellers. Previously, on September 28, 2000, I offered S. 3132 to allow the Park Service to acquire one acre of property adjacent to the park. The bill I introduce today will allow the Park Service to acquire 115 acres from willing sellers, including the one acre referenced in S. 3132. I urge my colleagues to support the preservation of George Washington's birthplace. I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3142

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL MONUMENT BOUNDARIES ADJUSTED.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "George Washington Birthplace National

Monument Boundary Adjustment Act of 2000".

(b) BOUNDARY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE NATIONAL MONUMENT.—The boundary of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument (hereinafter referred to as the "monument") is modified to include the area comprising approximately 115 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled "George Washington Birthplace National Monument Boundary Map Westmoreland County Virginia", numbered 332/80,011B, and dated July 2000. The map shall be on file and available for inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

(c) ACQUISITION OF LANDS.—The Secretary of the Interior may acquire land or interests in land described in subsection (b) by donation, purchase from willing sellers with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange.

(d) ADMINISTRATION OF LANDS.—Lands added to the monument pursuant to subsection (b) shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as part of the monument in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable hereto.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BROWNBACK, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HUTCHINSON, and Mr. STEVENS):

S. 3143. A bill to improve the integrity of the Federal student loan programs under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 with respect to students at foreign institutions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS IMPROVEMENTS ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I am concerned that we as a Congress have not been effective enough in oversight; that is, looking at the Federal agencies and Departments of this Government to make sure they are operating effectively.

We ooh and ah and make complaints and express concern, but we do not often follow through. I know fundamentally it is the responsibility of the administration to run the executive branch, but Congress does fund that branch and has every right to insist that branch does its duty effectively, expeditiously, and economically with minimum waste, fraud, and abuse.

I had the pleasure about a year ago to have a conversation with a wonderful lady, Melanie DeMayo, who used to work with Senator Proxmire and was involved in his "Golden Fleece Award" presentations. She convinced me I could play a role in helping to make sure, when a dollar is extracted from a hard-working American citizen and is brought to this Senate, this Government, to be spent, that it is spent wisely and not wasted or abused or ineffectively utilized to carry out whatever worthwhile program was intended. I appreciate her insight and help in thinking this through.

I have developed what I call Integrity Watch. I spent a number of years as a Federal prosecutor. I believe we can do a better job of maintaining integrity in this Government. When we are spending \$1.7 trillion a year, it is incumbent upon us to make sure there is oversight over these programs.

I have come to realize that we have a very large student loan program, and there are some problems with it. Today I am offering legislation to create a 12-month fraud control pilot program to reduce the incidence of fraud in the Federal Family Education Loan Program and other programs under title IV.

In recent years, there have been a number of cases of so-called students falsely claiming they are attending foreign schools, directing that their student loan checks be paid directly to them and not to the school, and then taking the money and spending it on themselves and not attending the foreign school. This fraud has been documented with many examples listed in a 1997 Department of Education inspector general's report.

In addition, the report contains recommendations on tightening controls for the program. Too often these reports are dry, detailed, and complicated. Nobody in this body even reads them, much less acts on them. Certainly, I doubt the President, who says he wants to increase foreign student loans, has read the report. We certainly have not seen any request from the administration to improve this. I believe we can and should do it in Congress.

It is time, I believe, for this Congress to close the loopholes which allow these phantom students to defraud the Government.

On April 19, 2000, President Clinton and Secretary of Education Riley declared that international education is a priority with them. They want to encourage more students to study abroad. In fact, the President issued a memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies stating that the United States is committed to promoting study abroad by U.S. students. He stated:

The Secretaries of State and Education shall support the efforts of schools and colleges to improve access to high-quality international educational experiences by increasing the number and diversity of students who study and intern abroad, encouraging students and institutions to choose nontraditional study-abroad locations, and helping under-represented United States institutions offer and promote study-abroad opportunities for their students.

Study abroad can be a wonderful experience for a student, and I do not oppose some form of student loan aid to students who want to take advantage of that. It can be an extraordinarily enriching experience. We do need to ensure that the program involves study and not a European vacation at the expense of hard-working American taxpayers for whom a visit to the ball park is often beyond their budget.

This new initiative by the administration will increase the risk of fraud unless we institute sound controls immediately. I am not referring to U.S. universities that have foreign programs or cooperative programs with foreign universities. I am talking about mainly the unsupervised foreign-based

institutions. Some of these institutions have already been criticized by General Accounting Office studies. Often these marginal schools are the very schools the so-called students use in their fraud scam. Their fraud is committed when they state they are registering in these schools and then simply pocket the money with no one the wiser.

Since 1995, there have been 25 felony convictions of students who fraudulently claimed they were attending a foreign school, and then they just cashed their Government loan check and simply did not attend class. In the United States, the check is made out to the school and the student, but with regard to foreign schools, the check is made out simply to the students. These are only the students who were caught doing their fraudulent activity. I have no doubt there are many more who have not been apprehended. That is why we ought to take action. We must prevent cases such as this one.

Mr. Conrad Cortez claimed to be such a student, and he applied for student loans. In March of 2000, he admitted to charges of submitting 19 fraudulent student loan applications over a 3-year period. He pled guilty before a U.S. district court judge to numerous accounts of mail fraud, bank fraud, and Social Security account number fraud in the State of Massachusetts. The prosecutor told the court in that case that Cortez was responsible for dozens of other loans filed outside Massachusetts—in Florida and Texas.

The absolute disregard for the American taxpayers was epitomized by Conrad Cortez. Mr. Cortez was living high at the expense of American taxpayers and in violation of law by filing false documents to receive loan money from the Government.

During the period from 1996 through 1999, he bought gifts for his friends, including jewelry and cars, paid for private tennis lessons, made a downpayment on a house, sent some money back to his native Colombia, ate in the best restaurants, and even paid restitution for a previous charge of defrauding the Government, and he did this all with the American taxpayers' money.

Mr. Cortez' fraud only ended when he was turned in by his sister's boyfriend, who claimed that Mr. Cortez had used his identity to obtain additional loans. In fact, Mr. Cortez was about to help himself to \$800,000 that you and I pay in income taxes. He had filed 37 false claims in all, spending the money as fast as it came in to him.

The inspector general's office of the Department of Education, with the FBI, and the attorney general's office in Boston combined forces to apprehend him before he could get all the money that was coming to him through those false loans. He did, however, pocket about \$300,000 before he was caught.

This is not an isolated case. In 1994, the General Accounting Office found that the Department of Education had approved student loans to hundreds of

students attending 91 foreign medical schools. Frankly, I am not sure there are 91 medical schools out there in this world, outside the United States, for which we ought to be funding education. If somebody comes to this country expecting to be a doctor, we need to know they have met certain quality education standards. But, at any rate, that is what we hear.

In applying its standards, the Department of Education relies exclusively on information submitted by those foreign schools as to their viability. Enforcement and oversight problems at the Department still abound. Who is to say how many students have fraudulently applied for loans? There isn't a report on that. Those are unknown unknowns, as they say in management. We cannot measure what we do not know.

Most likely, the greatest abuse of the system occurs when the student, for various reasons, just pockets the money and never goes to class. Under the present system, who will know? We do know that the system is broken. This legislation is one step toward fixing it.

Another abuse occurs when a foreign school is actually paid the tuition but does not insist that the student attend class and provides no real education to the student. I guess a foreign school could simply be glad to get the American money, the American check, and at that point it is up to the student whether or not he or she actually attends class or learns anything. I think we need to have the Department of Education look into that and make sure students are actually attending class and not taking a European vacation.

Mr. Cortez demonstrated a perfect example of why this program is high risk. There simply is not enough oversight. Currently, the methodology for approving and releasing student loan funds is vulnerable. Current law states that the student may request a check be issued directly to him or her, when claiming they are attending a foreign school, and a check will be sent directly to them, without the requirement of a cosignature by the school.

The Office of Inspector General at the Department of Education identified weaknesses and deficiencies in the following areas of the foreign school attendance programs: Verification of enrollment, the disbursement process, the determination of the borrowers' eligibility, standards of administrative and financial capability on the part of the foreign school, and general oversight of foreign schools.

The same Office of Inspector General report—that is the Department of Education's own inspector general's office within that Department—stated that the number of students claiming to attend foreign schools and applying for loans increased each academic year from 1993 to 1997 and went from 4,594 students to 10,715 students. Later figures show the number continues to increase. Indeed, in 1998–1999 there were 12,000 foreign loans.

My legislation will require the Secretary of Education to initiate a 12-month fraud control pilot program involving guaranty agencies—those are the people who put up the loan money guaranteed by the Federal Government—lenders, and a representative group of foreign schools to reduce the incidence of fraud in the student loan program. I believe the Secretary should look into a number of solutions.

Maybe the guaranty agencies should confirm that the student is enrolled in the foreign school before the loan is actually disbursed. After the money has been disbursed to the student, maybe the guaranty agencies should confirm that the student remains registered.

The Secretary should also determine whether it would be advantageous to require a loan check to be endorsed by both the student and the foreign institution. I am inclined to think it is. But we shall see. Maybe this evaluation period can help us determine that.

The question then becomes, Why are we paying for students to go to foreign schools? These are American taxpayers' dollars flowing to foreign economies where the standards of education may not be as high as ours. I have checked with the higher education systems in my State. They certainly are not at full capacity and certainly can handle more students.

Perhaps there should be some limit on the number of years of study abroad. How many? Five? Six? Seven? Is that limited today? No, it is not. Maybe we ought to limit the number of years that the taxpayers will fund foreign education. Today there is no limit. Students can complete their entire education abroad, supported by the taxpayers, sometimes not in good institutions. Perhaps the quality of the institution should be verified, among other things. But this will not be an issue raised by our legislation today.

Our legislation will simply go to the question of whether or not we can improve the way we guard against actual fraud in these loans. It will begin the process of erasing the fraudulent behavior of "students" claiming they are attending foreign schools and then pocketing the money for their personal lifestyle.

So I introduce this legislation today and hope my colleagues will quickly support such a measure as this because I believe it will reduce the fraud that has been plainly demonstrated in a critical report by the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education.

In the course of working on this, I would like to express my appreciation to a number of people who have played an important role in this. I thank the cosponsors of this legislation, including Senator JEFFORDS, who chairs the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee; Senator TIM HUTCHINSON of Arkansas, who is here, who has been a supporter and has had a great interest in this as a cosponsor; along with Senators BROWNBACK and COLLINS.

I also express my appreciation to Scott Giles of Senator JEFFORDS's office; to Melanie DeMayo, who has done such a tremendous job helping us identify and research this problem; and Anthony Leigh of my staff, who is with me now, who has helped me work on this.

We believe this is perhaps not a glamorous issue but an important issue, an important step we can take to eliminate plain fraud that is clearly occurring around this country to a substantial degree, defrauding the taxpayers of the money they have sent to Washington.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I commend the distinguished Senator from Alabama for his work in this area. I am glad I am cosponsoring the bill. Senator SESSIONS has been one of the tireless leaders in education and in rooting out fraud and abuse in the Department of Education.

I also mention, with Senator SESSIONS' help on the Education Committee, we recently sent a bill out that I sponsored on the Senate side, that passed the House of Representatives, which would require a fraud audit of the Department of Education be performed by the General Accounting Office within 6 months.

While the Senator is dealing with one specific area of fraud that is very serious, for which this legislation needs to be enacted, there are other examples of fraud, mismanagement, and abuse within the Department of Education that have come to light in recent days.

We are hopeful that legislation can move before this session ends. It is ironic that there are those who want the Department of Education to have even more power, such as in the hiring of 100,000 teachers or in school construction projects, when it is clearly a troubled agency that has had a real problem in even having a clean audit of their books.

So I commend the Senator heartily and appreciate the work he is doing.

By Mr. ROBB (for himself, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DEWINE, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 3147. A bill to authorize the establishment, on land of the Department of the Interior in the District of Columbia or its environs, of a memorial and gardens in honor and commemoration of Frederick Douglass; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS MEMORIAL

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I rise to introduce legislation to authorize a memorial and gardens in honor and commemoration of Frederick Douglass. Frederick Douglass was a renowned abolitionist and civil rights leader. As a powerful orator, Douglass spoke out against slavery. As an advisor to President Abraham Lincoln, Douglass advo-

cated for equal voting rights for African Americans. Frederick Douglass spent over 20 years living in the Anacostia region of Washington, D.C. and it is appropriate that we dedicate the National Memorial and Gardens to his memory in the community where he lived. As companion legislation gains momentum in the House, it is important that we pledge our support to this worthy endeavor.

Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 3148. A bill to provide children with better access to books and other reading materials and resources from birth to adulthood, including opportunities to own books; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ACCESS TO BOOKS FOR CHILDREN ACT

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to offer a bill to enhance our efforts to provide children with opportunities to develop literacy skills and a love of reading through access to and ownership of books. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Senator JEFFORDS, Senator KENNEDY, and Senator MURRAY.

This bill would continue the good work of the Inexpensive Book Distribution program which we know as Reading is Fundamental (RIF), and would authorize two new programs to support public/private partnerships with the mission of making books and reading an integral part of childhood and of providing books to children who may have no books of their own. Books opened a new world for me as a child and I want to make sure that all children have that same opportunity.

Books are almost magical in their power. They inspire children to dream, to imagine infinite possibilities and ultimately to work to make some of those possibilities real. But for too many children, the power of books is unrealized because of their own inability to read and because of limited access to books in their homes and communities. In 1998, 38 percent of fourth graders in America ranked below the basic level of reading according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Sixty-four percent of African American and 60 percent of Hispanic American fourth graders read below the basic level of reading.

These children are at high risk of never learning to read at an advanced level. When children do not learn to read in the early years of elementary school, it is virtually impossible to catch up in later years. Research shows that if a child cannot read well by third grade, the prospect of later success is significantly diminished. Seventy-five percent of students who score below grade level in reading in third grade will be behind grade level in high school.

But the foundation on which literacy is built, begins much earlier. Reading to babies teaches them the rhythms and sounds of language. As early as

pre-school, children can recognize specific books, can understand how to handle them, and can listen to stories for in books. The National Research Council's 1998 landmark study, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children," makes clear that to become good readers, children need to learn letters and sounds, they need to learn to read for meaning, and they must practice reading with many types of books to gain the speed and fluency that makes reading rewarding.

We know that children who live in print-rich environments and are read to in their early years are much more likely to learn to read on schedule. However, parents of children living in poverty often lack the resources to buy books, rarely have easy access to children's books, and may face reading difficulties of their own. For many families, where the choice is between buying books to read at home and buying food or clothes, federal programs that support book donations and literacy can change lives.

This legislation creates what I call the Access to Books for Children program (or ABC). It provides children with better access to books and resources from birth to adulthood, including opportunities to own books. The success of the Inexpensive Book Distribution Program is well-known. This program has enabled Reading is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF) to put books in the hands and homes of America's neediest and most at-risk children. RIF is the nation's largest children's and family literacy organization. Through a contract with the U.S. Department of Education, RIF provides federal matching funds to thousands of school and community based organizations that sponsor local RIF projects. Some 240,000 parents, educators, care givers, and community volunteers run RIF programs at more than 16,500 sites that reach out to serve 3.5 million kids nationwide. This bill would continue the good work of the Inexpensive Book Distribution Program and increase the authorization for this program to \$25 million.

This legislation also supports two new public/private partnerships to reach children with books and literacy services. The Local Partnerships for Books programs is funded not to support a new literacy project, but to support the ones that already exist with low cost or donated books. The program would support local partnerships that link with grassroots organizations to provide them with low-cost or donated books for at-risk, low income children. Local Partnerships for Books is organized around the principle that the private sector should be a major player in this effort to put books in the hands of our Nation's children through donations and partnerships.

This legislation would also support Partnerships for Infants and Young Children—a program that makes early literacy part of pediatric primary care. This program would support linking

literacy and a healthy childhood. Visits to a pediatrician are a regular part of early childhood and offer an excellent opportunity to empower parents to build the foundations for literacy. This initiative is modeled on Reach Out and Read (ROR) which utilizes a comprehensive approach—including volunteer readers in waiting rooms, physician training in literacy, and providing each child with an age appropriate book during each visit—to support parents in developing literacy in their children. An evaluation of this program found that parents are ten times more likely to read to their children if they received a book from their pediatrician.

Mr. President, this legislation is just one piece of the larger puzzle we must confront as we struggle to improve our children's literacy skills—but it is a piece that cannot be overlooked. To learn to read, kids need books to read; it is as simple as that. This legislation will harness the energies and commitment of volunteers, corporate America, local literacy programs, doctors and teachers to make books, and book ownership, a reality for every child.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill and an endorsement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3148

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Access to Books for Children Act" or the "ABC Act".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.

Part E of title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8131 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

"PART E—ACCESS TO BOOKS FOR CHILDREN (ABC)

"SEC. 10500. PURPOSE.

"It is the purpose of this part to provide children with better access to books and other reading materials and resources from birth to adulthood, including opportunities to own books.

"Subpart 1—Inexpensive Book Distribution Program

"SEC. 10501. INEXPENSIVE BOOK DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM FOR READING MOTIVATION.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary is authorized to enter into a contract with Reading is Fundamental (RIF) (hereafter in this section referred to as 'the contractor') to support and promote programs, which include the distribution of inexpensive books to students, that motivate children to read.

"(b) REQUIREMENTS OF CONTRACT.—Any contract entered into under subsection (a) shall—

"(1) provide that the contractor will enter into subcontracts with local private non-profit groups or organizations, or with public agencies, under which each subcontractor will agree to establish, operate, and provide the non-Federal share of the cost of reading motivation programs that include the distribution of books, by gift, to the extent feasible, or loan, to children from birth through

secondary school age, including those in family literacy programs;

"(2) provide that funds made available to subcontractors will be used only to pay the Federal share of the cost of such programs;

"(3) provide that in selecting subcontractors for initial funding, the contractor will give priority to programs that will serve a substantial number or percentage of children with special needs, such as—

"(A) low-income children, particularly in high-poverty areas;

"(B) children at risk of school failure;

"(C) children with disabilities;

"(D) foster children;

"(E) homeless children;

"(F) migrant children;

"(G) children without access to libraries;

"(H) institutionalized or incarcerated children; and

"(I) children whose parents are institutionalized or incarcerated;

"(4) provide that the contractor will provide such technical assistance to subcontractors as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this section;

"(5) provide that the contractor will annually report to the Secretary the number of, and describe, programs funded under paragraph (3); and

"(6) include such other terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of such programs.

"(c) RESTRICTION ON PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall make no payment of the Federal share of the cost of acquiring and distributing books under any contract under this section unless the Secretary determines that the contractor or subcontractor, as the case may be, has made arrangements with book publishers or distributors to obtain books at discounts at least as favorable as discounts that are customarily given by such publisher or distributor for book purchases made under similar circumstances in the absence of Federal assistance.

"(d) DEFINITION OF 'FEDERAL SHARE'.—For the purpose of this section, the term 'Federal share' means, with respect to the cost to a subcontractor of purchasing books to be paid under this section, 75 percent of such costs to the subcontractor, except that the Federal share for programs serving children of migrant or seasonal farmworkers shall be 100 percent of such costs to the subcontractor.

"(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the four succeeding fiscal years.

"Subpart 2—Local Partnerships for Books

"SEC. 10511. LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR BOOKS.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary is authorized to enter into a contract with a national organization (referred to in this section as the 'contractor') to support and promote programs that—

"(1) pay the Federal share of the cost of distributing at no cost new books to disadvantaged children and families primarily through tutoring, mentoring, and family literacy programs; and

"(2) promote the growth and strengthening of local partnerships with the goal of leveraging the Federal book distribution efforts and building upon the work of community programs to enhance reading motivation for at-risk children.

"(b) REQUIREMENTS OF CONTRACT.—Any contract entered into under subsection (a) shall—

"(1) provide that the contractor will provide technical support and initial resources to local partnerships to support efforts to provide new books to those tutoring, men-

toring, and family literacy programs reaching disadvantaged children;

"(2) provide that funds made available to subcontractors will be used only to pay the Federal share of the cost of such programs;

"(3) provide that the contractor, working in cooperation with the local partnerships, will give priority to those tutoring, mentoring, and family literacy programs that serve children and families with special needs, predominantly those children from economically disadvantaged families and those children and families without access to libraries;

"(4) provide that the contractor will annually report to the Secretary regarding the number of books distributed, the number of local partnerships created and supported, the number of community tutoring, mentoring, and family literacy programs receiving books for children, and the number of children provided with books; and

"(5) include such other terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of the program.

"(c) RESTRICTION ON PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall require the contractor to ensure that the discounts provided by publishers and distributors for the new books purchased under this section is at least as favorable as discounts that are customarily given by such publishers or distributors for book purchases made under similar circumstances in the absence of Federal assistance.

"(d) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL SHARE.—For the purpose of this section, the term 'Federal share' means, with respect to the cost of purchasing books under this section, 50 percent of the cost to the contractor, except that the Federal share for programs serving children of migrant or seasonal farmworkers shall be 100 percent of such costs to the contractor.

"(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The contractor shall provide for programs under this section, either directly or through private contributions, in cash or in-kind, non-Federal matching funds equal to not less than 50 percent of the amount provided to the contractor under this section.

"(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for the fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.

"Subpart 3—Partnerships for Infants and Young Children

"SEC. 10521. PARTNERSHIPS FOR INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

"(a) PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary is authorized to enter into a contract with a national organization (referred to in this section as the 'contractor') to support and promote programs that—

"(1) include the distribution of free books to children 5 years of age and younger, including providing guidance from pediatric clinicians to parents and guardians with respect to reading aloud with their young children; and

"(2) help build the reading readiness skills the children need to learn to read once the children enter school.

"(b) REQUIREMENTS OF CONTRACT.—Any contract entered into under subsection (a) shall—

"(1) provide that the contractor will enter into subcontracts with local private non-profit groups or organizations or with public agencies under which each subcontractor will agree to establish, operate, and provide the non-Federal share of the cost of reading motivation programs that include the distribution of books by gift, to the extent feasible, or loan to children from birth through 5 years of age, including those children in family literacy programs;

“(2) provide that funds made available to subcontractors will be used only to pay the Federal share of the cost of such programs;

“(3) provide that in selecting subcontractors for initial funding under this section, the contractor will give priority to programs that will serve a substantial number or percentage of children with special needs, such as—

“(A) low-income children, particularly low-income children in high-poverty areas;

“(B) children with disabilities;

“(C) foster children;

“(D) homeless children;

“(E) migrant children;

“(F) children without access to libraries;

“(G) children without adequate medical insurance; and

“(H) children enrolled in a State medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

“(4) provide that the contractor will provide such technical assistance to subcontractors as may be necessary to carry out this section;

“(5) provide that the contractor will annually report to the Secretary on the effectiveness of the national program and the effectiveness of the local programs funded under this section, including a description of the national program and of each of the local programs; and

“(6) include such other terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of such programs.

“(c) **RESTRICTION ON PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall make no payment of the Federal share of the cost of acquiring and distributing books under any contract under this section unless the Secretary determines that the contractor or subcontractor, as the case may be, has made arrangements with book publishers or distributors to obtain books at discounts at least as favorable as discounts that are customarily given by such publisher or distributor for book purchases made under similar circumstances in the absence of Federal assistance.

“(d) **DEFINITION OF FEDERAL SHARE.**—In this section with respect to the cost to a subcontractor of purchasing books to be paid under this section, the term ‘Federal share’ means 50 percent of such costs to the subcontractor, except that the Federal share for programs serving children of migrant or seasonal farmworkers shall be 100 percent of such costs to the subcontractor.

“(e) **MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—The contractor shall provide for programs under this section, either directly or through private contributions, in cash or in-kind, non-Federal matching funds equal to not less than 50 percent of the amount provided to the contractor under this section.

“(f) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.

“Subpart 4—Evaluation

“SEC. 10531. EVALUATION.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall annually conduct an evaluation of—

“(1) programs carried out under this part to assess the effectiveness of such programs in meeting the purpose of this part and the goals of each subpart; and

“(2) the effectiveness of local literacy programs conducted under this part that link children with book ownership and mentoring in literacy.

“(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—For purposes of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated \$500,000 for fiscal year 2001, and such sums as

may be necessary in each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.”.

REACH OUT AND READ

NATIONAL CENTER,

Boston, MA, June 23, 2000.

Hon. EDWARD M. KENNEDY,

U.S. Senate,

Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR KENNEDY: I enthusiastically welcome the “Access to Books for Children Act” that you, along with Senators JEFFORDS and DODD, are introducing before the U.S. Senate in the coming days.

In my years as a pediatrician, I have witnessed the wide-ranging impact of poverty on thousands of families, particularly as it relates to the healthy development of children. One particularly troublesome manifestation of poverty is the barrier that it erects to having books in the home.

We know that early brain development requires environmental stimulation, and we also know that book sharing assures the language stimulation essential for neuronal complexity and maturation. None of this will happen without books nearby—books in the home.

Making sure that all children have the opportunity to grow up with books requires the participation of all professionals that care for young children. Through the more than 740 Reach Out and Read sites across the country, we are mobilizing the pediatric community to do our part in meeting this challenge. We are delighted by the prospect of support for our efforts through this legislation.

I thank you for the leadership you continue to show in supporting parents in their efforts to help their children grow up healthy. We look forward to helping in any way we can.

Sincerely,

BARRY ZUCKERMAN, MD,

Chairman.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I am proud to be a co-sponsor of the Access to Books for Children Act, the “ABC” Act. I commend Senator JEFFORDS, Senator DODD, and Senator MURRAY for their leadership on this legislation.

Many successful programs are helping children learn to read well. But too often, the best programs are not available to all children. As a result, large numbers of children are denied the opportunity to learn to read well. 40 percent of 4th grade students do not reach the basic reading level, and 70 percent of 4th graders are not proficient in reading.

Children who fail to acquire basic reading skills early in life are at a disadvantage throughout their education and later careers. They are more likely to drop out of school, and to be unemployed. This important grant will help many more children learn to read well—and learn to read well early—so that they have a greater chance for successful lives and careers.

The programs authorized in the ABC Act complement the work already under way in Massachusetts and other states under the Reading Excellence Act and under the America Reads program. In 1996, President Clinton and the First Lady initiated a new effort to achieve greater national progress on child literacy by proposing their “America Read Challenge.” This worthwhile initiative encourages col-

leges and universities to use a portion of their Work-Study funds to support college students who serve as literacy tutors. Institutions of higher education across Massachusetts are already creating strong relationships with their surrounding communities, and participation in this initiative enhances those relationships. Today, over 1,400 colleges and universities are committed to the President’s “America Reads Work Study Program,” and 74 of these institutions are in Massachusetts.

The Reading Excellence Act was enacted in 1999 to provide competitive reading and literacy grants to states. States that receive funding then award competitive subgrants to school districts to support local reading improvement programs. The lowest-achieving and poorest schools will benefit the most. The program will help children learn to read in their early childhood years and through the 3rd grade using effective classroom instruction, high-quality family literacy programs, and early literacy intervention for children who have reading difficulties. Massachusetts is one of 17 states to receive funding under this competitive program.

In addition to good instruction, children need to have reading materials outside of school—and even before they start school. They also need adults to read with them, so that they can develop a love of reading early in life.

The ABC Act authorizes three programs to provide children from birth through high school age with low-cost or no-cost books. The programs complement one another by reaching different communities through different means, so that every child can have a book to read.

The act reauthorizes \$25 million for the successful Reading Is Fundamental Program, which distributes books to school-age children. This program has been especially effective in Massachusetts. It is helping over 45,000 children at 70 sites across the state obtain access to books. As a teacher from Methuen said, “RIF continues to excite our students by providing them with books they can call their own, exposing them to a variety of literature, and offering these children worlds unknown.”

Founded in 1966, Reading Is Fundamental serves more than 3.5 million children annually at 17,000 sites in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. Over two-thirds of the children served have economic or learning needs that put them at risk of failing to achieve basic educational goals. By the end of 2000, it will have placed 200 million books in the hands and homes of America’s children.

The act also authorizes \$10 million for the Secretary of Education to award grants to organizations that provide low-cost or no-cost books for local tutoring, mentoring, and family literacy programs. Programs such as First Book have been very successful in encouraging reading. In 1998, First Book was able to distribute more than

2.4 million new books to children living below the poverty line throughout the United States. First Book originally committed to distribute two million new books to children over 3 years and add 100 additional First Book communities. Through the extraordinary efforts of its Local Advisory Boards and national partners, First Book has met and far exceeded its book distribution pledge of 2 million books, and has met its expansion goals. We should continue to support programs like First Book that involve businesses and community resources in programs to help ensure that all children have access to books.

The ABC Act also authorizes \$10 million for the Secretary of Education to award grants to the organizations that provide free books to children under age 5 in pediatric clinics. Programs like Reach Out and Read in Boston are shining examples of how to provide children with access to books and prereading skills through health check-ups with their pediatricians.

For the past 10 years, through private funding, Reach Out and Read has been helping young children ages 0–5 get the early reading skills they need to become successful readers. Reach Out and Read currently serves 930,000 children in 556 local sites in 48 states. Evaluations of the program show that Reach Out and Read increases parents' understanding of reading and their attitude towards reading—especially to their children. Parents are ten times more likely to read to their children if they have received a book from a pediatrician. Children's brain activity is stimulated by reading, enhancing their intellectual and language development. In addition, the program is cost-effective—on average, the cost is only \$5 per child.

Holyoke Reach Out and Read is run by Holyoke Pediatric Associates, a large medical practice serving 30,000 clients from Holyoke and surrounding communities in Massachusetts. Sixty percent of the clients are low-income or medicaid eligible families. The program distributed over 3,000 books to children in 1999.

It may seem unusual to talk about literacy in a hospital, but it makes perfect sense. To see that children learn to read, everyone needs to lend a hand. Physicians can be a major part of being of the effort. They can help children and parents understand that reading will enhance the well-being of every child, just as milk and vitamins do. A good book may turn out to be the most important thing a doctor prescribes for a child.

Reach Out and Read is making it possible for many more young children to have access to books and take the first steps toward learning to read and toward becoming good readers in their early years. It is bringing books and the love of reading to many new children every day.

Reading is the foundation of learning and the golden door to opportunity.

But for too many children, it becomes a senseless obstacle to the future. Children need and deserve programs like Reading Is Fundamental, First Book, and Reach Out and Read. None of us should rest until every child across the nation has the opportunity to own a book, enjoy a book, and read a book. The nation's future depends on it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that additional material be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FIRST BOOK,
Washington, DC, June 29, 2000.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MURRAY: On behalf of First Book's Board of Directors, national volunteer network, and the children and families we serve, I congratulate you and the other co-sponsors of The Access to Books for Children Act. This legislation will change the lives of millions of low-income children by providing these children with personal libraries of their very own. Yours is a piece of legislation whose time has come.

As you know, First Book is a national non-profit organization with a single mission: to provide an ongoing supply of free, new books to economically disadvantaged children and families participating in community-based tutoring, mentoring, and family literacy programs nationwide, as well as those children without access to libraries. Through our Local Advisory Board network, First Book effectively promotes the growth and strengthening of local partnerships with the goal of leveraging federal book distribution efforts and building upon the work of existing community programs designed to enhance reading motivation for at-risk children.

First Book Local Advisory Boards develop these local partnerships by identifying local resources and securing donations to meet the needs of community-based literacy programs serving low-income children by providing them with access to free books. I look forward to working with the Secretary to support and promote these local programs in order to consistently reach the children who need our help the most.

First Book is deeply grateful, Senator Murray, for your continual support of our mission as well as your commitment to the education of all children. Since we began our work together in 1997, First Book Local Advisory Boards in Washington state have distributed more than 250,000 new books to 48,000 children in 250 local programs. I am also proud to announce that there are currently 15 Local Advisory Boards leveraging the power of community-based partnerships in your home state. As you know, First Book is active nationally in hundreds of communities providing millions of new books to hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged children. Because of your efforts, the ABC Act will enable First Book to build upon this great success in Washington state and across the country.

I also salute the co-sponsors of the ABC Act. Senators James Jeffords, Edward Kennedy, and Chris Dodd have each strongly supported First Book at both the national and local levels in our constant efforts to reach additional children. Through their own volunteer efforts working with low-income children, Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, and Dodd have served as inspiring examples in Washington, D.C. and nationally. In the same way, you and your co-sponsors have

provided essential leadership to promote the education of children across the country and have also directly supported First Book, most notably through the First Book National Book Bank initiative launched last June on the grounds of the Capital.

In closing, I would like to share a quote from a letter I received this morning from an Even Start teacher who incorporates First Book books into home visits in which she teaches low-income parents how to read with their children. "It has been very rewarding to be able to give the books to the children at the home visits. Before First Book, we took a book to share with the family and then had to take the book away with us. Many times there were screams of protest from young children. [After First Book] we find that the families are thrilled with the books and look forward to receiving them."

Simply put, it shouldn't take "screams of protest" from young children to remind us of what we need to do. Thankfully, you and the other co-sponsors are aware of the many challenges facing these young children and you have developed a thoughtful and effective plan to meet their needs and strengthen on-going efforts at the community level. The Access to Books for Children Act will provide millions of new books to low-income children lacking books of their own. I look forward to working with you to bring the magic of book ownership to these many children still waiting for our help.

Sincerely,

KYLE ZIMMER,
President.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 61

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 61, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to eliminate disincentives to fair trade conditions.

S. 198

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the training of health professions students with respect to the identification and referral of victims of domestic violence.

S. 459

At the request of Mr. BREAUX, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 459, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the State ceiling on private activity bonds.

S. 662

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS) were added as cosponsors of S. 662, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide medical assistance for certain women screened and found to have breast or cervical cancer under a federally funded screening program.

S. 670

At the request of Mr. JEFFORDS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 670, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that